



News From:

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CONGRESSMAN LARSON INTRODUCES BILL TO TRAIN WORKERS FOR THE JOBS OF THE FUTURE

Washington, DC - Today, Congressman John B. Larson (*CT-01*), Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, along with more than 15 other members of Congress, introduced legislation that will help train our workforce for the jobs of the future and boost our economy. The Community College Technology Access Act will open the doors of community college technology labs and training opportunities to the public in order to provide workers who are lacking key computer skills the opportunity to attain them.

Congressman Larson said, **"By broadening their mission, community colleges have the potential to be a hub to train our workforce for the jobs of the future. With this legislation we are helping them fulfill their potential and boost local economies around the country."**

Community colleges can reach every corner of this country with more than 1100 campuses in rural, urban and suburban areas.

Congressman Larson's legislation is based on a proposal developed by Dr. Rob Shapiro, Chair of NDN's Globalization Initiative, to use our community colleges as efficient, cost-effective training grounds for our workforce.

"Chairman Larson has again shown that he understands the need to provide America's workers with the skills to succeed in the competitive global economy, particularly during these tough economic times," Shapiro said. "The Community College Technology Access Act is a cost-effective investment that will help workers get ahead. Tens of millions of Americans graduated high school or even attended college in the years before computers and the Internet became ubiquitous. Many of them are now entering, or are already in, what should be their most productive and highest-earning years. But without basic information technology skills, many workers are trapped in dead-end jobs, and as non-wired employment becomes obsolete, they face being locked out of the mainstream workforce entirely."

The legislation would provide funding to community colleges that offer technology training and open their computer labs to the public for at least 30 hours each week. The legislation has the support of the Association of Community College Trustees and the American Association of Community Colleges. Then- Senator Barack Obama included a similar idea as part of his platform during the campaign for the presidency.

A recent poll shows that only 53 percent of low-income Americans use the internet or email. Without the skills to use this technology, these workers are boxed out of opportunities in the high growth industries that will lead the country out of this recession. By providing them with training opportunities we are opening doors to fulfilling careers, while boosting our local economies.

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